

Spark Gap

Volume 25, Issue 10, October 2008 *MARC - Serving Central Indiana Communities for Twenty-Five Years*

Hilltopper OTA Event

The Indianapolis Radio Club recently started an annual exercise called the "Hilltopper OTA Event", to encourage amateur radio activity in Indianapolis and surrounding areas for the purpose of fun and meeting on the air. The objective is to contact as many portable hilltop stations as possible. Contacts can be hilltop to hilltop, or from home stations to the hilltop stations. An award is given to the top scoring hilltop station.

Last year several of our club members activated Independence Hill in Center Grove to operate portable stations. This year the date of the event conflicted with our annual club picnic. At first I thought we would have to forego the contest and concentrate on the picnic. Jack Parker suggested we operate from the picnic location, since the contest was prior to the picnic time. This was a way to have our cake and eat it too (literally), so that's what we did. We didn't really have a "hill", so we named our location "Ant Hill", as it seemed a logical tie-in to our picnic. Graphics appeared, and plans began to evolve in early September.

Very early in the morning of September 20, 2008, several hardy individuals assembled in darkness to begin set-up of our portable club station (WA9RDF). The OTA event was to run from 8 A.M. until Noon, on the 2-6-10 & 40 meters bands. In pre-dawn light, we had an hour to assemble antennas, hang dipoles, run coax, and hook up all our equipment. Our antennas consisted of an all band bazooka, 10 & 40 meter half-dipoles, a 6 meter stressed moxon, and a 2 meter vertical yagi. We had everything operational

by 8:20 A.M. The battery powered operation consisted of a 40 meter station manned by Steve, N9LC, 10 meter station operated by Chris, KG6ZIJ, and Jacki KI6QOG, and a 6 meter station with Bob, KC9NJM, as Steve, K9DY, made a few contacts on 2 meter FM. Jack, W8ISH helped with setup before departing to do VE duties at the EOC.

In the final analysis we contacted 3 other hilltop locations, 1 home station for a total of 6 contest contacts. Chris and Jacki also made a few non-hilltop contacts in other states, so we were getting out. We had less than stellar results for the exercise, but we had a lot of fun and the weather was perfect. Portable operations are always a learning experience, and improvements can be implemented for future field operations. We may not have won the contest, but later we were joined by family and many club members for fun, fellowship, and lots of good food. Getting to play with radios and eat is always a good thing. By: Steve K9DY

*The Official
Newsletter of the
Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club*



Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club
P. O. Box 836
Franklin, IN 46131
www.midstatehams.org



Greenwood Band Contest

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club once again assisted with parking and public safety for the Greenwood High School Marching Band Invitational on Saturday September 27th. The event was very well attended possibly due to the excellent weather we had that day. This year there were 26 marching bands that participated and with that comes lots of cars, buses and semi-rigs to park.

We had 11 club members that helped with the event. Many of the amateurs that helped reported they received compliments from those that attended and they stated that they appreciated us looking after them and pointing the way to park.

I would like to thank the following stations that helped: W8ISH, KB9LOT, KC9NJM, N9QVO, AA9YG, KA9OOH, KC9ODW, KC9EBL, KC9GCH, WB9AYB and KC9OAG.

The Band Parents organization is wanting our help again for this next year's Invitational so mark your calendar for the 4th Saturday of September, that is the tentative date for the event.

73, Bob N9SIU, Marching Band Event Coordinator

Thanks!

COMPUTER HELP A big THANK YOU goes to Bryan Kilgore KC9OAG. Bryan's expertise with computers and networking has us well connected in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) radio room. A recent desk top computer donation gave us a faster processor but lacked a working network card. Bryan came to the rescue and fixed things up. Now we are able to go online when needed. Brian resolved problems with the Lexmark printer and the ID Badge Printer. Brenda Haler KC9EBL, should be able to issue new club ID's beginning at the October meeting.

MARC Club Picnic

Saturday September 19, 2008 began the day with a low hanging fog covering Johnson County cornfields. As the morning sun rose over the Union Christian Church parking lot, several ham radio operators were busy gearing up for some food, fun and frequencies.

This year's club picnic began with an early morning Hilltop radio contest. Amateur Radio Operators across Central Indiana worked similar stations at hilltop locations. Our "Anthill" location qualified as one of the lowest contest elevations. Steve Carmean K9DY coordinated the effort and has more on that in a companion piece in this Spark Gap Newsletter.

As the noon sun warmed the air, hot dogs and hamburgers began to sizzle on the grill. Brenda -KC9EBL worked the charcoal grill while dozens of special picnic dishes made their way to the serving table. JR KB9HSE, provided the Texas chili. Nearly three dozen club members and their families enjoyed an afternoon of food, radio chatter and good company.

Following a short business meeting club president Jack Parker W8ISH, asked former office holder Bob LaGrange N9SIU, to swear the new board members into office. Jack, VP Dave Daily KB9LOT, Treasurer Steve Carmean K9DY, and newly elected Secretary Jacki Frederick KI6QOG, took their oath of office. This is the second term for Jack and Steve and the fourth time around for VP Dave. Jacki provides a fresh face and new ideas for helping our club grow in it's 25th year.



Officers

President:
Jack Parker,
W8ISH

Vice President:
Dave Daily,
KB9LOT

Secretary:
Jacki Frederick,
KI6QOG

Treasurer:
Steve Carmean,
K9DY

Repeater Trustee:
Jay Chrisman,
AA9YP

Spark Gap Editors:
Linda
Harshbarger,
KC9GCH

Hamfest Info

The **36th Annual Fort Wayne Hamfest** will be held on November 15-16, 2008 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum Exposition Center in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Hamfest hours are 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM EST on Saturday and 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM EST on Sunday. Tickets at the gate are \$6.00. For the latest on the hamfest go to www.fortwaynehamfest.com.

The **16th Annual Evansville Hamfest** will be held on Saturday, November 29, 2008 at the Vanderburgh Co. 4-H Center in Evansville, Indiana. Talkin will be on the 145.150- Evansville/146.925- & 443.925+ Vincennes (EARS Wide Area Repeater Network). All use 107.2 PL tone. Hamfest hours are from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM CST. Admission is \$7.00. Corporate sponsor is the Ham Station. For more information or to find a map of the location go to <http://w9ear.org>.

If you know of any other Indiana hamfests coming up, please contact Linda at PIO@midstatehams.org. I'm also gathering information on any Indiana 2009 hamfest so please send info to me at the above e-mail address.

Volunteer Info

MARC's next event will be the Goblin Patrol on October 31, 2008. To volunteer, please contact Dave Daily KB9LOT, at vp@midstatehams.org or Linda Harshbarger, KC9GCH, at pio@midstatehams.org. Dave usually gets information shortly before the event so please let him know if you are interested in participating and your contact information and he will get back to you prior to the event. For those who will be trick or treating with children in your neighborhoods please remember to take your HTs with you and call in to the MARC net (146.835 (151.4 PL) if you spot any activity that needs to be forwarded to the proper authorities. Help us make Halloween a safe event in our communities.

VEC Testing

Our Volunteer Examiner Coordinator (VEC) team is ARRL accredited, and capable of administering any amateur radio test. As a public service, the Mid-State Amateur Radio Club sponsors test sessions after all but one of its monthly meetings. (September testing is done prior to the picnic.) Meetings begin at 8:00 AM with testing following the meeting (begins about 9:30 AM until 11:00 AM). We would love to have you join us for the meeting. Please check out our website at www.midstatehams.org for directions.

Technician Class

Fall classes will begin on October 27th, 2008. Classes will be held on October 27, November 3, November 10, and November 17. Students ready to test will be given two chances to do so; at the regular MARC meeting on Saturday, November 15, 2008 or on the last night of class on November 17, 2008. Currently 13 have registered for the class with one spot remaining open.

We will also be holding another Technician class starting sometime in early to mid-February. Anyway not able to make the fall class may go ahead and pre-register for the Spring 2009 class by e-mailing PIO@midstatehams.org or by calling Linda at 887-2558.

General Class I've received several requests for a General Class. The plan is to have a General Class beginning in July 2009 after the 4th of July holiday. We will need to find enough instructors before this is made final. Anyone with a General or above license may serve as an instructor. Please let Linda know if you wish to take a class or wish to instruct a class. Planning will begin immediately after the first of the year.

Instructors If you have taught a class and are a member of the ARRL, please go on the ARRL website and register as an instructor.

**WA9RDF
Repeater
146.835/
146.235 MHz
151.4 Hz PL
Tone**

**Weekly Net
Every Sunday
at 7PM ET**

***Tune in to hear
the ARRL
Newsline!***

*The Mid-State
Amateur Radio Club
sponsors a weekly
traffic and social net
on our repeater. The
net begins at 7:00
p.m. local time, and
features local news,
announcements, and
NTS traffic, as well as
rebroadcasts of
Amateur Radio
Newsline. This is a
great chance to
meet other local
amateur radio
operators and test
your operating
skills.*

2008 Schedule of Events

OCTOBER 2008

18 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

18 Decatur Old Fashioned Hamfest 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Corner of Rea's Bridge & Brush College Roads, Decatur, IL
Talk in 146.730- 123.0PL; 442.250+ 103.5PL

31 Halloween - Goblin Patrol

For more information contact Dave Dailey at vicepresident@midstatehams.org

NOVEMBER 2008

2 Daylight Savings Time Ends

4 Election Day

15 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

15-16 Ft. Wayne Hamfest; Allen County War Memorial Coliseum Exposition Center

Ft. Wayne, IN Hours Saturday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM EST; Sunday 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM EST

27 Thanksgiving

29 Evansville Hamfest; Vanderburgh Co. 4-H Center; 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM CST

Talk-in 145.150- 107.2 PL; 146.925- 107.2 PL or 443.925+ 107.2 PL

DECEMBER 2008

6 NWS SKYWARN Appreciation Day

NWS, Indianapolis Office

20 MARC Meeting - 8:00 AM

Located at the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, IN. VEC Testing after the meeting (approx. 9:30 am to 11:00 am)

21 Winter Begins

25 Christmas



Mid-State Amateur
Radio Club

P. O. Box 836

Franklin, IN 46131

www.midstatehams.org

317.887.2558

Spark Gap

Mid-State Amateur Radio Club

The Mid-State Amateur Radio Club meets the **THIRD SATURDAY** of each month in the basement of the Johnson County Emergency Management Agency, 1111 Hospital Road, Franklin, Indiana 46131.

See our website, www.midstatehams.org, for maps on how to get to our meeting.